

FINAL BILL REPORT

ESSB 5555

C 112 L 11
Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Concerning interbasin transfers of water rights.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Environment, Water & Energy (originally sponsored by Senators Parlette, Hatfield, Morton, Honeyford and Hewitt).

Senate Committee on Environment, Water & Energy
House Committee on Agriculture & Natural Resources

Background: Washington operates under a water right permit system. The right to use water that has been put to beneficial use is, and remains, an appurtenance of the land or place where the water is used. The Department of Ecology (Ecology) may permit certain changes to a water right. Ecology may also permit a transfer of a water right from one holder to another. In processing change or transfer applications, Ecology analyzes the validity, limits, and quantity of the right. If it appears that the transfer of the water right, change of point of diversion, or purpose of use can be made without harming existing rights, Ecology must grant the transfer or change.

Summary: For counties located east of the crest of the Cascade mountains, Ecology may only approve a change or transfer application for an interbasin water rights transfer after providing notice electronically to the board of county commissioners in the county of origin upon receipt of an application.

Votes on Final Passage:

Senate	48	0
House	93	0

Effective: July 22, 2011.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.